

RURAL REPOSITORY.

VOL. I.

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No. 13.

" Prompt to improve and to invite,
" We blend instruction with delight."—Pope.

POPULAR TALES.

" To virtue if these Tales persuade,
" Our pleasing toil is well repaid."

FROM THE FREE PRESS.

LAFITTE,

OR THE

Baratarian Chief.

A TALE.

(Continued from Page 90.)

Evening found us on board the fine stout brig *Cleopatra*, laden with indigo, cochineal, and a quantity of spice. She was a British vessel, just arrived in the river from Santa Cruz, and now employed as a cartel in exchanging some prisoners by directions of the commanding officer on the West India station. From New-Orleans she was to proceed to New-York: and I gladly availed myself of the opportunity offered to visit my native region, from which business and war had so long detained me. The stranger, on parting with us as we went on board the *Cleopatra*, bid us adieu with the manners of a gentleman; and, while Anson was cursing some of the rigging which had been procured at New-Orleans as a mere Yankee contrivance, he, in a half suppressed voice, whispered: "There are rovers on the deep: Should difficulty overtake you, remember Lafitte." As he pronounced these words he leaped into a small boat which had floated alongside the steamboat in which we had descended the river, and amidst the duskiness of the evening was soon out of sight among the craft which almost covered the surface of the waters.

"By the powers!" exclaimed Anson, who had caught the tones of the stranger's voice, low as they were uttered; "that is the very man who killed the other up the levee yesterday morning; ah, I smell another rat too,—he is the pirate himself," continued Anson with a kind of shudder—"my head does not feel half so safely seated on my shoulders as it did ten minutes ago; but can we not overhaul him? I should like to lay myself alongside of him well-armed as he is."

"If you should, Anson, brave as you are, it is my opinion you would find yourself in a more disagreeable predicament than when you was boarded by a Kentuckian. If however, we meet with a pirate, we need fear nothing. A dozen such fellows as you are might enable us to bid defiance to old Neptune himself."

"You are right, sir," replied the sailor: "while that flutters," (pointing to the colours

which streamed gayly in the wind,) "I will insure the safety of the *Cleopatra*. But I am so sleepy, that if the vessel was striking on breakers, or pirates were boarding, I could hardly keep awake." So saying, he stowed himself in his hammock—and in a few minutes nothing was to be heard but the wave of the Mississippi as it dashed against the vessel, the measured pace of the sentinel as he traversed the quarter deck, or the heavy breathing of those of the crew, who after a hard day's service, were refreshing themselves in the sweet embraces of sleep.

I too threw myself upon my bed, but not to sleep. A thousand circumstances united to interest my mind and to keep me wakeful.—I was about to return to the land of my fathers, the home of my childhood. Home! that endearing word!—what tender recollections crowd upon the mind, when the ten thousand charms of that delightful place present themselves in all their sweetness and freshness. Long as I had been separated from my native state,—long as I had traversed the various regions of the globe—long as it had been since half the wide world had interposed between me and the place where I had first tasted the pleasures and the pains of life; I had not forgotten a single scene around which memory lingered with such interest. The village spire, which threw its shadow over the green, where, with the companions of my boyhood, we wrestled, jumped, ran, laughed, and sported, while the ball flew rapidly round the circle;—the gloomy churchyard, which, when a truant boy, I had so often shudderingly passed when the pale moon glimmered athwart the marbles which crowded the sacred enclosure, and, to my affrighted imagination, appeared to people the dreary place with the tenants of that world from which no traveller returns—the hills, I had so often climbed—the green vallies, I had so often crossed—the mountains, among which I had so often roved in pursuit of such game as they afforded;—all passed in review: and I even thought with rapture on the huge rock which was shaded with the branches of my favorite walnut-tree, and where, happy as the squirrel which barked over my head, I had spent many an hour cracking the nuts which every breeze made to rattle around me.

The various countries and scenes through which I had passed since first I became a wanderer from the land of my childhood, now that my imagination pictured those wanderings as drawing to a close, rose in all their various

shades before me ; and the pains and pleasures of my peregrinations were again presented in bold relief by the powerful effect of memory. Over the civilized plains of Europe and the semi-barbarous regions of Asia, I have roved. I had seen the aurora borealis dance over regions of eternal frost—the sun in vain attempt to dissolve the chains which an arctic winter had formed—and I had felt its fervid heat where equinoctial skies shed their debilitating and pernicious influence. I had traversed the plains of Oronoco and the banks of the La Plata ; I had climbed the Cordilleras, and, with the enthusiasm of youth, beheld the setting sun gild those bright Isles of the Pacific which are sprinkled in such profusion over the surface of its broad blue waters, and whose inhabitants are as guileless and unsuspecting as their skies are bright and cloudless.

I had seen the St. Lawrence rolling its majestic stream, collected from a thousand lakes to the Ocean—and I was then floating on the bosom of the father of rivers, which, rising among the frozen lakes and interminable forests of the north, discharges its turbid waters into the Mexican Gulf, amidst the orange groves and sugar plantations of the south ; while, after years of absence had elapsed, I was about to visit the parental roof, with the intention of bringing my wanderings to a close, and spending the remainder of my days in quiet contentment and peaceful happiness. Nor was my interview with the stranger of such mysterious character and appearance forgotten. His apparent connexion with the pirates, who, if report stated correctly, frequented the islands which lie off the Mississippi, and whose inhuman atrocities formed a common topic of conversation at New-Orleans, I felt to be ominous of the result of our voyage ; and although his words to me afforded a ray of hope, I wished I had not seen him.

Such were my feelings as I in vain wooed the god of sleep for a temporary oblivion to my perturbed ideas ; and it was not until the watch had been changed for the last time that I fell into a slumber, from which I did not awake in the morning until the vessel was already several miles on her voyage.

When I went upon deck the vessel was floating along the current between the high woods which covered both banks of the river. Scarcely a breath of wind was to be felt—the sails hung idly against the mast, and we depended on the current alone to speed us to the Ocean. If ever there was a country over which the genius of desolation might be said to hold undisputed dominion, it is the region around the mouths of the Mississippi. Below Plaquemines it is one dreary and desolate marsh, covered with cane and reeds, and sinking gradually to the dead level of the Gulf.—For miles before we reached the mouth of the river, the sea could be distinctly seen from the mast-head, stretching away on each side of the

point of land formed by the continual depositions of this mighty stream. Subject to overflow by the rise of the Mississippi or the inundations of the Gulf, and frequently submerged to the depth of six or eight feet by the autumnal tornadoes, no living animals are to be seen, and the cormorant, as he wings his lonely way along these dreary shores, finds a precious resting place on the banks of sand shells which the continual breaking of the waves has raised around these pestilential marshes.

At last the bar was passed, and we found ourselves on the broad bosom of the Gulf.—The sailors, delighted with the prosperous commencement of the voyage, were all mirth and glee, and, while the sails were filled with the breezes which were hurrying us as we fondly imagined to New-York, our port of destination, the cann of grog circulated freely, and mirth, and dance, or song, swept the hours rapidly away.

Our Captain was an able officer, in whom we could repose the utmost confidence,—the subalterns were experienced and attentive—the crew consisted of eleven hardy rough sons of the Ocean, making in the whole, including myself and two other passengers, about twenty souls on board. The vessel was a new stout ship merchant rigged, but mounting six guns and well provided with arms, ammunition, and all the necessary implements of defensive or offensive war.

The day passed away, and it was not until the forenoon of the second day after leaving the river, that any thing occurred to vary the dull monotony of a sea voyage. I was sitting in my cabin arranging some packages of papers, &c. when I was roused by an unusual uproar on deck, and the boatswain's shrill whistle calling all hands to quarters. I speedily deposited in their trunks the papers I was reviewing, and hastened to the deck—before I reached which, however, I heard several guns fired. The cause of alarm was a vessel of suspicious appearance, which had been bearing down for some time apparently with an intention of crossing the Cleopatra's course, and though the British colours were flying at the mast-head, (and they were within hail,) they neglected to answer the repeated call of Capt. Cowden, who at last ordered a gun to be fired over them. To this no attention was paid—few men were to be seen on deck—and the vessel continued her course in a manner which indicated an intention to lay the vessel immediately on board our ship. At this moment Capt. Bowden hailed them and ordered them to keep off, or he would fire upon them—when the decks of the vessel were instantly crowded with armed men—the British colors were hauled down and the red flag displayed—and a heavy fire of musquetry opened upon us from the pirate—for such it was evident she was. The guns of the Cleopatra which could be brought to bear with admir-

ble effect, and it was soon evident that if they could be prevented from boarding us, the conflict would not long remain doubtful.

"Three to one my brave lads," cried Capt. Bowden, as through his glass he surveyed his assailants; "but were they five to one, we shall soon make them count one to two—sweep their decks, boys! we'll teach the rascals to keep a respectful distance."

Finding his attempt to board unavailing, the pirate hauled off out of the reach of our small arms which had done great execution among his crowded decks. The cessation of the contest was however but momentary—our assailant returned to the attack with fury, and in spite of our exertions succeeded in grappling our vessel. His decks exhibited a motley assemblage of ferocious looking villains, black, white, and yellow, whose horrid imprecations and oaths were enough to appal the bravest heart, as repulsed from our bulwarks in their attempts to board it was only to renew the assault with double desperation and rage. Several of our bravest fellows had already fallen, when twenty or thirty of these tigers took advantage of a swell of the sea which brought the vessels in contact, and sprung on board the *Cleopatra* sabre in hand. They were met by our crew with such vigor that scarcely had a minute elapsed before their numbers were reduced one half, and the remainder was wavering when a fellow threw himself on board from the piratical vessel, put himself at the head of the assailants, and with shouts and imprecations urged his followers forward. "Hell and furies!" cried he—"shall these few men escape in this way? send them to perdition in a moment—remember all or nothing!"

Capt. Bowden threw himself before the pirate, and a combat of the most obstinate kind ensued, terrific and desperate. A pause of some moments ensued among the other combatants, who suspended the work of death to witness a contest on which so much was depending. At last British valour rose triumphant, and the pirate dropped mortally wounded upon the deck.

"Capt. Bowden for ever!" shouted Anson, as the blood spouted from the mouth of the marauder mixed with curses and execrations, while he flew to finish the work of death upon the remainder. Anson's bravery carried him so far that he was surrounded, and a blow was aimed at him which would have speedily sent him to Davy's Locker, had not a blow of my sabre dropped the fellow's head from his body, and his spouting trunk tumbled lifeless to the floor.

"That fellow is anchored where he wont slip his cable this hundred years," cried Anson, as he gave the head a kick which tumbled it nearly across the deck, "but never let me taste the roast beef of old England again, if I don't believe that you have wielded the sabre before now."

"Very likely, my good fellow," I replied, "but before we think of roast beef we must rid the vessel of these villains."

"Have at the rascals then" shouted Anson, as he thrust his sword to the hilt through the body of a huge negro, and before he had time to drop, seized him and tumbled him into the ocean.

"The sharks may have him in welcome if they can stomach the black dog: I wont have such a stinking fellow on the *Cleopatra's* deck," said Anson, as the waves splashed against the vessel from the negro's fall.

Anson, however, had no time for soliloquizing, for he was confronted by a tall, weasel-faced Frenchman, whose rapid thrusts and skilful manœuvres it required all his attention to meet. At last, thin as was the mark, Anson's sabre hit and the Frenchman fell.

"Cursed poor!" said Anson, as he placed his foot on the fallen foe and extricated his weapon, "thin as your frog soup—a fellow might read the Assembly's Catechism through you."

At this instant another vessel which was within a few miles at the commencement of the struggle, and which as soon as the firing commenced, had approached us rapidly, now neared us sufficiently to enable us to discover, that, like the vessel with which we were already engaged, she was a pirate. When she was within fifty yards of us, her crew gave a shout which was instantly echoed from our first assailant, and our decks were again crowded with the motly crew of desperadoes.

"There is but one alternative," said Capt. Bowden to me; "we must either conquer or die;—our situation is indeed desperate; but it cannot be so bad as to be hopeless."

So saying he put himself at the head of the few men he had remaining—and few indeed they were; for, of the brave men who were so cheerful and happy in the morning, but six or eight were left—the rest lay mixed with the foes who were piled in slaughtered heaps around. Our charge was murderous, and the screams of the wounded and groans of dying were heard above the dash of the waters, the din of the conflict, or the shouts of the combatants.

The tide was quickly turned, and the deck was on the point of being speedily cleared, when a figure of the most athletic appearance, his face covered with blood from a sabre wound in his head, around which a handkerchief was tightly bound, and his features distorted with rage, sprung from the deck of our first opponent, and sabre in hand rushed upon Capt. Bowden.

"Curse on your cowardice!" cried he to his followers; "shall two men drive you to the devil? If you want the whole prize, fight; if not, wait till you are obliged to share it with Lafitte."

The conflict was terrible. As Anson en-

deavored to parry a blow aimed at Capt. Bowden, the buccanier by a sudden wheel of his sabre severed his shoulder from his body—I was covered with his blood—and, giving a single groan, he fell lifeless at my feet.

“Poor fellow! thou shalt not die unrevenged,” I cried, and closed with his murderer. By a violent effort, and before he could save himself from my impetuous attack, I had dashed him to the deck and was on the point of transfixing him with my sabre, when my feet, which were wet with blood, slipped, and I fell upon my antagonist. He was too much injured by the fall to be able to avail himself of the advantage my accident had given him,—but I was instantly seized by a half a dozen of the pirates, and should have been speedily sacrificed had not Capt. Bowden thrown himself among them, and with his death-dealing sabre freed me from their grasp. I was hardly on my feet before the cry, “they are boarding us on the starboard quarter!” was heard, and I perceived that a fresh band of murderers were already on board.

“If we must die let us sell our lives at as dear a rate as possible,” said I to Capt. Bowden; and we rushed upon the gang who were pouring upon the starboard quarter of the *Cleopatra*. Our swords soon thinned their numbers, but we were weary with slaughter, and there appeared no end to our toils. Four only of our crew were left, and we felt that we must soon sink under the overwhelming force which was pouring upon us from all sides. At this instant a volley of musketry killed every man of our crew, who had hitherto escaped to assist us in stemming the torrent—and Capt. Bowden and myself found ourselves surrounded by wretches, whose yells, oaths and imprecations, made them more resemble demons than human beings. To prevent being placed in a situation where we could not keep our enemies at bay, we retreated, or were rather carried by the crowd of assailants to the corner of the vessel where a pile of slain rose around us, and the deck was flooded with gore.

“Fools to throw away your lives in this manner!” shouted a stentorian voice from a person who was seen struggling through the crowd of assailants; “give them the cold lead!” And this order was obeyed by a volley of balls which brought Capt. Bowden to the deck, while the life-blood flowed in torrents from his numerous wounds. “Oh my dear wife and children! Great God, protect them!” was all he could utter before he was a lifeless corps at my feet.

The man who had given the order, and who from his commanding manner appeared to be the chief of the pirates, had cleared his way through the assailants, and with his drawn sabre now confronted me. I rejoiced to see him; for his strength and the manner in which he wielded his instrument of death, convinced me that if he conquered, my death would not be

lingering—and if he fell I should have the satisfaction of freeing the earth of a monster.

The combat was obstinate. I fought with the hopelessness of desperation, and pressed my assailant so closely that he found himself unable to resist the assault, when by an unlucky blow my sabre was snapped in a dozen pieces, and I stood before him unarmed and defenceless. Baring my bosom, I inwardly commended myself to my maker, and told him to strike; but to my surprise he dropped the point of his weapon, and, looking me earnestly in the face, as he wiped the blood from his brow, exclaimed:—“Not when unarmed, brave men honour the brave—you are safe—remember Lafitte!” And I instantly recognised him as the person who had so strongly attracted my attention while on our voyage from New-Orleans to the English Turn.

(To be continued.)

FROM THE CONNECTICUT COURANT.

THE MORALIST.

“Look not thou upon the Liquor when it sparkles, when it giveth its colour to the cup, when it moveth itself aright: at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.”
SOLOMON.

Would you learn how like a serpent drunkenness biteth and how like an adder it stingeth,—then contemplate the disgusting figure and the deplorable circumstances of *Silenus*.—Behold this miserable wreck of a man!—He is not yet turned of forty, yet totters in his steps, like one of fourscore.—See him weakened in intellect, morose in temper, lost to all sense either of honour or shame, lost to all affection towards the wife of his bosom and the children of his own body.—Mark the stupidity of his countenance, and the morose aspect of his blood-shorten eyes, his palsied hand, and the leprous tetter that covers his skin. Turn now and behold his wife—there she sits in that corner covered with a thin tattered robe and shivering over a handful of coals.—See her pale and emaciated—her eyes dim with weeping and her cheeks furrowed with tears—Hapless woman!—who can but pity thee? who can but mingle his tears with thine? Look next on those suffering children.—They receive nought but frowns and curses and blows from the man whom they had been taught to call by the endearing name of father; yet they have a friend whose bosom throbs with tenderness towards them; but her hand is too feeble to supply their needs.—They ask their mother for bread, but she has none to break for them. The storm howls through the broken windows, and they say, “we are cold:” she answers them only with sighs. Alas! she has none to bind up her own bleeding heart. And is this the once sensible and sprightly *Silenus*, fortune’s child, who inherited a large patrimonial estate, whose pockets were lined with gold? Is that too the once gay and beautiful *Philenia*, the delight of her parents, the joy

and the life of the social circle?—Is that the pair that commenced the connubial state with prospects the most flattering?—The same.—“How fallen, how lost!” And what has wrought this terrible reverse in their circumstances?—What has turned this man into a brute? What has plunged this woman into the deepest distress, insomuch that her tears are her meat? What has rendered these children miserable? What *fiend* has poisoned and destroyed the happiness of this whole family? That cursed *fiend* is drunkenness.—Time was when *Silenus* was a kind husband and affectionate father, when his company gladdened the heart of his wife, when his little prattlers used to meet him at the door and received his fond caresses. Time was when every room in his mansion was gilded with domestic happiness, when he ranked in society as a useful member and ornament, and when the eye that saw him, blessed him, and the ear that heard him was respectfully attentive. But *Silenus* looked on the sparkling liquor, while giving its colour and temptingly moving itself in the cup—he tasted, he at length tiptoed daily; the habit became rivetted—he plunged occasionally into intoxication, he at last became a downright sot.—His estate is consumed, and of all the poor people, his family are among the most wretched.—“Dig they cannot,” having never been taught to labour—“to beg they are ashamed.”—This is not romance: there are many families in our country, whose deplorable situation corresponds with this description.

THE TRAVELLER.

“He travels and expatiates as the bee
“From flower to flower, so he from land to land.”

MANNERS OF THE SCOTCH.

A lively little volume has appeared at Edinburgh, from the pen of Charles Nodier, the novelist, entitled “Promenade from Dieppe to the Mountains of Scotland,” in which he has depicted with a good deal of truth, though in some parts rather highly colored, some of the customs and manners of the Scottish Mountaineers. In his journey northward, he passed through London, where he visited St. Paul’s Cathedral, and the menagerie of wild beasts in the Tower; objects not much calculated, in our author’s estimation, to afford either amusement or rational gratification. On arriving at Edinburgh he remarks, “the few last days of our stay in this city were enlivened by a happy circumstance: it was, however neither the time of the Gaelic hall, nor the distribution of the prizes for bag-pipe playing. Some other cause, of which I am ignorant, occasioned about ten Highland chieftains to visit Edinburgh in all the pomp of their beautiful costume. A Scottish Chieftain, with his dirk and his pistols, his bonnet, his plaid drapey in the Grecian style, his chequered hose,

which, like all the tartan stuffs worn in the highlands, call to mind the tatooing of the ancient inhabitants of the country: his wild nudity and his dignified and courteous manner, presents altogether a living tradition (perhaps unique in Europe) of the vigor and freedom of past ages.

What he says in the following paragraph, respecting the females of Glasgow going barefooted, is strictly true as respects the “lower classes;” but as to the “middling, and a considerable number of the higher classes.” it is incorrect. In the country, the practice obtains among the rich as well as the poor; but in the city of Glasgow, it is altogether confined to the lower orders. We have even seen servant girls in genteel families there, who had altogether abandoned it.

“The women of Glasgow, says our author, have generally and judiciously kept the old Scotch cloak, which is exceedingly well appropriated to the rigorous climate of the country. This cloak, which is exceedingly like the Venetian domino, is pretty often of a dark woollen cloth of little show. The most elegant are of that pretty tartan stuff which was fancied for some time by the ladies of Paris. The most common are of a dazzling red, the effect of which, produced by an association of ideas not necessary to explain, appeared horrible to me above two bare legs. The women of the lower classes, almost all those of the middling, and a considerable number of those of the higher classes, go barefooted. Some have adopted shoes only. The fashionable ladies who have adopted the Parisian dress, have also borrowed the shape of their shoes, though in reality they are more like those of men; but this part of their accoutrements is what incommodes them the most, and is what they throw off with most pleasure when they are at liberty. A brilliant Scotch Belle has hardly exhausted the admiration of the *fashionables* in Glasgow, when she longs for solitude; and the first thought which occupies her in some bye-path, some solitary garden, or in the mysterious obscurity of her chamber, is not, as with us, the recollection of the last man who looked at her with a sigh, or the last woman who eclipsed her toilet; it is the impatient want of taking off her shoes and stockings, and to run with bare feet on the carpet, the turf, or the sand of the high road. The sight of these bare feet is hardly ever disgusting, even among the people, nor is there any thing in it painful to sensibility, when we see them spreading out on the smooth flags of the broad foot-ways in Glasgow. Those that have shoes do not look near so well. The flat and broad form of the shoes, with buckles or strings, does not at all conceal the size of the foot, which no doubt is very conformable to the natural proportions, especially in a nation where nothing has impeded the freedom of motion for a long series of ages, but which is shocking to our eyes, accustomed to

the forced exiguity of the feet of French women, which, in this respect, hold a kind of medium between the Scotch and Chinese. The foot of the mountaineer, destined to press on narrow, slippery, steep spots, ought of course to be broad and strong. Feet which are small out of all proportion, are a beauty of the *boudoir*, which can only be appreciated by persons condemned by their own choice, to see the world only through a window, and travel over it in a carriage."

MISCELLANEOUS.

"Variety we still pursue,
"In pleasure seek for something new."

OPERA COURTSHIP.

At an English opera house, a gentleman fell suddenly in love with a young lady, who sat with her mother and sisters a few seats from him; tearing a blank leaf out of his pocket book, he wrote with a pencil, "May I inquire if your affections are engaged?" and handed it to her, which she showed to her mother. Shortly afterwards she wrote underneath this question, "I believe I may venture to say they are not; but why do you ask?" and returned him the paper. The gentleman then wrote on another leaf, "I love you dearly; I am single; I have £1000 a year; I am not in debt; I have a good house; and I only want a good wife to make me completely happy: Will you be mine? if you will, I promise (and with every intention of keeping my word) to be an affectionate, indulgent, and faithful husband to you and what more can I say?" The young lady was so much pleased with this declaration, that they immediately became acquainted; and, in about four months afterwards, with the leave of her parents, he led her to the hy-meneal altar.

A fellow who was tried at Dublin, for some private offence, received the following sentence—*Judge*: The sentence of the court is, that you be flogged from the Bank to the Quay.—*Prisoner*: Thank you, my Lord, you have done your worst.—*Judge*: And be flogged back again.

COMMUNICATIONS.

FOR THE RURAL REPOSITORY.

No. IX.

"Mysterious woman! Be mine the task
"To scan your virtues and reprove your faults."

It is a fact that will not be denied, that females, in common with our own sex, give melancholy evidence of deficiency in judgement and good taste in their choice of books. When it is considered that the character is as much formed, and the mind and disposition receive their cast, as much from reading as from actual experience, we cannot but be surprised at the comparatively little attention that is paid to this important subject. There are few parents,

who would not blush at the bare thought that their children were unable to read, who yet take no pains to direct their choice, and seem to consider it a matter of indifference, whether the advantages they confer upon them are the means of acquiring valuable information, or of storing their minds with light and frivolous ideas. Such persons should reflect that there is but little to choose between the mind that is a perfect blank and that which is obscured by dark and confused impressions. If either, the former is preferable, for that will admit of culture, while the latter is not susceptible of improvement. The parent, that has conferred upon his child the ability to read, should remember he has given it a power, upon the judicious exercise of which, depend in a very great degree its future happiness and reputation.—Although this simple attainment may at first view appear of little importance, it exerts more influence, and is the source of more gratification, than every thing else within the scope of human acquirement. It opens a field boundless in extent and endless in the variety of its objects; where the curiosity, ever on the alert, may range without limit and without controul. While exploring the enormous mass of books, which the genius, enterprise and learning of centuries have collected; where there are so many objects to distract the attention, bias the judgment and corrupt the taste, the utmost care is necessary to direct the choice.

It is to be regretted that there is a sort of universal predisposition in young minds to prefer light and frivolous, to more rational, solid and instructive reading—and where this previous distaste does not already exist, it is almost from necessity acquired. There is a natural volatility and fondness for novelty incident to youth. Their imaginations are usually warm and undisciplined. Whatever captivates their fancy, they take without examination. Works of a solid nature require too much intensity of thought and too great an effort of the attention. The mind should be gradually trained to research and deep reflection; but this cannot be done without the aid of a vigilant and judicious instructor. But though those books, which are calculated to afford the most valuable information are extremely repulsive to youthful minds, this is not always the case. History, for instance, frequently affords as much pleasure and amusement, as the most visionary and ingenious works of fiction: but there we sometimes meet with incidents and narrations which shock and disgust a delicate mind. It is true, that in history we catch the 'living manners' of other ages—participate in scenes that have long gone by; and are able to mark the progressive march of human improvement: It is true, we can there gaze on the splendours of ancient genius, and admire the majestic achievements of ancient enterprise; but it is equally true,

that history is little other than a record of crime and of blood-shed—a true but painful commentary on the depravity of our species. We there, as at present, trace ambition by its carnage, and luxury and extravagance by the desolation that marks their progress—From it, we learn that the same passions which debased men then, degrade them now, and the humiliating truth, that neither government nor laws can restrain the evil propensities of our nature.—From a prospect so disheartening, the mind readily turns to the contemplation of fairer and brighter scenes.

Of those works which are the most seductive and consequently the most dangerous, poetry and novels take the first rank—and it is difficult to determine which should be guarded against with the most caution. The former is peculiarly pleasing to youth. Its smooth flowing melody—its sweet and harmonious verification mingle in congenial unison with the silver current of youthful emotion. The scenes which the poet describes are arrayed in the brightest colourings of fancy, and are free from those disgusting recitals, which are constantly crossing the path of the faithful historian. It is the privilege of the former to paint the picture as he would have it; it is the duty of the latter to represent things as they are. Besides, there is a versatility in poetry well adapted to description, which is always pleasing. But though poetry is pleasing and undoubtedly produces habits of reading in some who would otherwise remain in perfect indolence, and though it has an acknowledged tendency to improve the taste, these few advantages are more than counteracted by the careless and inattentive habit of reading it occasions. As he who saunters by a flowing stream finds his pace insensibly hastened or retarded with the motion of the current, and as the waters dashing from cliff to cliff give new impulse to his feelings and elasticity to his step; so the reader of poetry is generally borne, carelessly along upon its smooth and flowing current, charmed with its melody and lulled to indifference by its music.

Some of the foregoing observations, it will be observed, relate rather to the manner of reading, than to the choice of books. But habits of perusal depend entirely upon the selection we make. If we read for amusement, to pass away an idle hour, we naturally select those works which furnish the most novelty, and delight us most by the variety of their scenery, or their beauty of description. As we do not expect to acquire information, we follow the author in all his flights of fancy, and range at ease through the new and strange creations his genius has invented. It may with safety be asserted, that no considerable fund of valuable information can be acquired from reading poetry—it is not its object to instruct. A person may spend half his days in dabbling in rhyme and verse, and be able to repeat vo-

lumes by heart, without having one valuable idea. A familiar acquaintance with poetical authors is, of itself, no evidence of a well-furnished mind or of great intellectual attainments. To indulge occasionally in reading poetry, like any other amusement, may be well—it relaxes the mind, renews its energies, and prepares it for severe and intense application.

It is an error, common to young readers, and from which older ones are not entirely exempt, to select those authors which write in a flowery and metaphorical style. A little embellishment, it is true, is essential to a good style, yet, it not unfrequently happens, that a good idea is abandoned for a metaphorical flourish, and sound sense sacrificed to a well turned period. In reading, therefore, the sentiment to be conveyed, and the information to be communicated, should engage the whole of the attention—and that author may be said to write in the happiest and best style, who conveys his ideas in the most simple and perspicuous language. Rapidity in reading, which is generally produced by the perusal of light and frivolous works, is almost as pernicious as downright heedlessness. Reading is not a mere mechanical operation, but combines thought and reflection, without which, it is little better than the careless whistle of the ploughman. There is something peculiarly unfavorable to the formation of correct habits of reading in the literary character of the age. A taste for bookmaking has become so predominant, that it is almost impossible to keep pace with the popular productions of the day. And so much has the public taste become perverted, that whoever wishes to retain a standing within the sphere of literary etiquette, must devour every fanciful work as it issues from the press. Have you read the last novel? is the all important inquiry which every one must be prepared to meet, and to answer in the affirmative. But as few have the power of bestowing that time and attention to novels their multiplicity demands; and as some acquaintance with them is indispensable, a sort of necessity is created for running over them with rapidity and dispatch. In this manner, the habit of careless reading has become so universal, that it is the part of charity to graduate the knowledge of ordinary readers, not by what they *know*, but by the *number of books* they have read.

OBSERVATOR.

SUMMARY.

A pump has been invented at Baltimore, which is said to work almost of itself, and to raise the water to any given height. The expense of making is small, and the plan simple.

At the last Brighton cattle show, General H. A. S. Dearborne exhibited a glasshive, which had been filled with honeycomb in 22 days and was supposed to weigh 100 pounds.

MARRIED.

In this city, on Monday the 15th inst. by the Rev. H. Malcom, capt. JOHN POWER to Mrs. EUNICE JENNINS.



POETRY.

THE DYING CHIEF.

The stars look'd down on the battle plain,
Where night-winds were deeply sighing,
And with shatter'd lance, by his war-steed, slain,
Lay a youthful Chieftain dying.

He had folded round his gallant breast,
The banner, once o'er him streaming,
For a noble shroud, as he sunk to rest
On the couch that knows no dreaming.

Proudly he lay on his broken shield,
By the rushing Guadalquiver,
While, dark with the blood of his last red field,
Swept on the majestic river.

There were hands which came to bind his wound,
There were eyes o'er the warrior weeping :
But he raised his head from the dewy ground.
Where the land's high hearts were sleeping ;

And " Away ! " he cried, " your aid is vain,
My soul may not brook recalling,
I have seen the stately flower of Spain
As the Autumn vine-leaves falling !

I have seen the moorish banners wave,
O'er the halls where my youth was cherish'd ;
I have drawn a sword that could not save,
I have stood where my king hath perished ;

Leave me to die with the free and brave,
On the banks of my own bright river !
Ye can give me nought but a warrior's grave
By the chainless Gaudalquiver ! "

FROM THE MINERVA. TO A MANIAC GIRL.

Oh ! why that look that tells of grief,
Which does not ask, nor seek relief ?
And why that wild and phrenzied air,
Which speaks of madness and despair ?
And why that pallid cheek ? and why
That vacant gaze—that deep drawn sign ?
And why those garments rudely thrown
Around thy form ?—And why that groan,
That rends the palpitating breast,
And tells that misery is thy guest ?

In vain I seek—I ask in vain—
Those lips shall never speak again—
Those cheeks again shall never bloom,
Nor those eyes sparkle—soon the tomb
Shall take thee to its cold, yet kind embrace,
And hide from earth, thy name and thy disgrace ?
L.

*Selected, and now inscribed to Miss Margaretta, by J.
Frederick.*

Ah ! gentle maid, my heart is thine,
A victim at fair beauty's shrine ;
If pity in thy bosom dwell,
O ! sooth my woes, my griefs dispel.

The silent moon glides mildly shorn,
And night's dark gloom her smiles adorn,
When those bright eyes their beams display,
That moon in envy steals away.

May sweetest dreams thy pillow greet,
And cherub sylphs around thee meet,
Though I in sacred sadness rove,
To fan the flame of hopeless love.

A REFLECTION.

I've seen, in autumn's deepest gloom,
Beneath the fading poplar's shade,
The lovely field-flower spring and bloom,
The lonely beauty of the glade.

But winter's cold and chilling blast,
Soon wanton'd o'er the naked field ;
It nipt the flow'ret as it pass'd,
And bade the beauteous blossom yield.

So soft, by virtue fair refin'd,
I've known the meek and lowly heart,
The noble, pure, and holy mind,
Shrink from affliction's wintry smart.

It saw no human power to save,
Tho' long it struggled mid the gloom ;
Till overwhelmed in sorrow's wave,
Its only refuge was the tomb.

EPIGRAM.

My sickly spouse with many a sigh,
Oft tells me,—*Billy*, I shall die :
I griev'd, but recollected straight,
'Tis bootless—to contend with fate :
So resignation to heaven's will
Prepar'd for me succeeding ill ;
'Twas well it did, for, on my life,
'Twas Heaven's will—to spare my wife.

ENIGMAS.

" We know these things to be mere trifles."

Answer to PUZZLES in our last.

PUZZLE I.—Because he is guided by a minister.

PUZZLE II.—The bells are (w)ringing.

PUZZLE III.—Assassin.

PUZZLE IV.—Understanding.

NEW PUZZLES.

I.

It blooms not in spring, yet is alive in all May,
In winter's extinguished save in the middle of day,
It expires in the sea, where its seen but not heard,
And flies in the heavens in the heart of a bird ;
It sails in a boat, and it lies in an oar,
And it sprouts up in rain while it dies in an hour ;
It delights not in fruit though it smells of a grape,
And is the pivot of man, and a resemblance in fate :
In peace it presides, though continually in war,
And though asleep in hunger, yet full in its maw ;
Modesty it has none, but ever in shame,
And while a kin to the coward is always in fame ;
Puzzles it abhors, though its a puzzle to guess
Where lies the puzzle of this puzzling mess.

II.

Why is a table like a person that cannot work with-
out tea ?

III.

What African Prince is the first of April like ?

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